

FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Special School Committee Meeting

Northampton, Massachusetts

Submitted via email to Annie Thompson, Clerk to the Committee on October 19, 2020

Dear School Committee Members,

I write to encourage the School Committee to consider two factors in your deliberations on JLMC metrics and recommendations scheduled for a special meeting on Tuesday, October 20.

First, two recent articles by public health researchers at Harvard University draw attention to the problems that stem from keeping children home from school, offering metrics for schools to weigh in considering moving from one model to another. One researcher, Joseph Allen, refers to keeping kids out of school as “a national emergency” that “is not being treated as such.” Links to these articles are below for your reference and consideration. These national-level observations are supported by the public comments and letters to the editor, especially from families with young children, in our own community of Northampton.

Second, I urge you to consider mitigation measures to combat social isolation and problems related to keeping children home from school. These problems include children’s mental health and well-being, addiction, child neglect, child abuse, unattended children under age 10, and deferred medical care, among others. Mitigation measures could be implemented any time the School Committee opts for remote instruction.

Thank you.



Steven Moga
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“Is slow approach to reopening schools failing kids?” *Harvard Gazette*
<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/10/is-the-slow-approach-to-reopening-schools-failing-kids/>

“U.S. schooling during covid-19 doesn’t deserve a passing grade, Here’s the way forward,”
Washington Post, October 14, 2020.
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/10/14/us-schooling-during-covid-19-doesnt-deserve-passing-grade-heres-way-forward/>